

VZCZCXRO7012
OO RUEHDT RUEHPB
DE RUEHJA #2113/01 3631016
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 291016Z DEC 09
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4206
INFO RUCNARF/ASEAN REGIONAL FORUM COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 002113

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR S/R PANDITH
DEPT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/MLS, EAP/RSP, DRL, DRL/IRF
NSC FOR D. WALTON

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [OVIP](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KISL](#) [ID](#)
SUBJECT: S/R PANDITH'S DECEMBER 15-16 VISIT TO INDONESIA

REF: JAKARTA 02027

11. (U) The following messages is Sensitive but
Unclassified. Please handle accordingly.

12. (SBU) SUMMARY: During her December 15-16 visit to
Indonesia, Special Representative to Muslim Communities Farah
Pandith spoke about President Obama's and Secretary Clinton's
vision of U.S. grassroots engagement with Muslim communities
throughout the world. Noting the importance of Indonesia,
S/R Pandith outlined for the press, officials, academics and
students the importance of private sector involvement, the
promotion of entrepreneurship, and the engagement of civil
society in order to connect with the
next generation. She stressed the importance of helping to
find ways to build new partnerships, the use of technology,
and acting as a convener, facilitator and intellectual
partner. SRMC stressed the impact Muslim youth can have
through building of networks among like-minded individuals
both on a local and more regional level. The local press has
reported accurately and positively on her visit. END
SUMMARY.

VISIT TO SOLO AND JAKARTA

13. (SBU) During her December 15-16 visit to Indonesia
Special Representative to Muslim Communities Farah Pandith,
traveled to Solo in Central Java and Jakarta. She met with
officials, academics, students and the press in both cities.
She toured the national Istiqal Mosque in Jakarta, and
visited a church and mosque in Solo which share a common
wall--and friendly relationship. Following are highlights of
her visit. The main component of the visits were
opportunities to talk with students both in high school and
at a university. SRMC also stressed the importance of
Indonesia as a model of how Islam, pluralism, women's rights,
and democracy work well.

SOLO -- HARMONY IN FORMER CENTER OF ISLAMIC MILITANCY

14. (SBU) S/R Pandith traveled to Solo to see first hand the
steps that Mayor Jokowi had taken to facilitate tolerance in
the city and environs. Jokowi focused his efforts on
community participation, entrepreneurship, infrastructure
improvement, interfaith dialogue and law enforcement.
Through his efforts, relative harmony has been achieved among
the different religious groups in Solo (there is a large
population of Christians) and 24 Islamic boarding schools
(pesantren). The city government has
built markets, relocated squatters, and provided free
computers and internet connections to marginalized
communities.

15. (SBU) In her separate meetings with the mayor, pesantren residents, and State Islamic University students, Pandith explained President Obama's and Secretary Clinton's vision for a new form of grassroots engagement with Muslim communities throughout the world. She talked about why Secretary Clinton had established an Office of the Special Representative for the first time in US history and she talked about the importance of pluralism in America. She challenged the students to be leaders in their schools and communities, and to use social media to showcase Islam in Indonesia to the world. She stressed the importance of entrepreneurship in demonstrating to Muslim youth in other countries that they can shape how Islam is viewed internationally. She highlighted parts of the President's Cairo speech and talked about the importance America places on building partnerships with Muslims around the world. She focused on the diversity of Islam which got much support from the audiences.

IN JAKARTA -- SOLICITING IDEAS TO GROW RESPECT

16. (SBU) On December 16, S/R Pandith met with members of the recently formed Indonesia America People to People (IA-P2P). IA-P2P was created in response to President Obama's Cairo speech. In line with the President's vision, the founders --leading Indonesian academics and retired politicians-- are working at a grassroots, level to facilitate "mutual understanding and mutual respect." She urged the Indonesians to tell their story of a Muslim majority country that had embraced religious tolerance, democracy, and modernity. The group explained that Indonesia's commitment to these values and principles needed to be maintained and nurtured,

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particularly among young people.

17. (SBU) Members of IA-P2P explained the steps that their organizations had taken to highlight for Indonesian youth the importance of these values. Examples of the group's actions included: producing a movie which focused on tolerance; publishing books by both Indonesian and foreign authors who spoke about the benefits of religious plurality; and printing comic books whose main characters respected religious differences. The well regarded rector of Paramadina University Anies Baswedan stated that Indonesian youth could usefully connect with young people around the world to discuss issues of mutual concern such as good governance and protecting the environment. He explained that Paramadina's graduate school offered a course on eliminating corruption. As part of the course, students had to identify, research and report on local cases of corruption. In order to document the corruption, many students made short videos and/or took photos. Pandith, who was very enthusiastic about the project, encouraged Baswedan to establish a Facebook page, which explained the effort and included the student's videos, photos and stories. Moreover, the Indonesian students could encourage youth in other countries to submit their own examples of uncovering corruption. Pandith offered to connect Baswedan with experts on setting up Facebook pages.

18. (SBU) During a lively dinner hosted by the Ambassador with leaders from the government, civil society, academic and business communities, the guests shared their experiences, explained on-going projects, and proposed projects on instilling the value of respect and tolerance among Indonesian youth. The Ambassador urged his guests to discuss among themselves, as well as with S/R Pandith, how best to encourage business involvement in the process. Many of the guests were eager to bring the private sector forward into helping on these issues. One of the guests, Lily Munir, talked about a new program she was launching out of the NGO Sisters Against Violent Extremism (SAVE) where they create youth events that get kids interested and active on pushing back against violent extremist ideology.

¶9. Embassy Jakarta has many ideas using local NGOs to work on issues that utilize technology and youth and SRMC will be working closely with post on building some of the ideas out. Further, SRMC noted that in her meeting with women activists they were interested in doing more to show the diversity of Islam. The guests were from all parts of the spectrum and felt that America could do more to help the image of Muslim women globally to turn it from one of pity and stereotypes to one that reflected the positive and modernity of what is taking place on the ground in many parts of the world.

PRESS COVERAGE -- POSITIVE AND ACCURATE

¶10. (SBU) Press coverage of S/R Pandith,s visit was both positive and accurate. The influential paper "Rakyat Merdeka," circulation 200,000, published three articles and one photo of her visit. One headline read, "U.S. Engages with Youth in Muslim World." TV1, with a viewership of 7 million, ran footage from Pandith,s tour of the Grand Mosque Istigal on a weekly religious talk show. During the interview, Pandith spoke about the U.S. government's commitment to engage with Muslim communities.

¶11. (U) Special Representative Pandith has cleared this message.
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